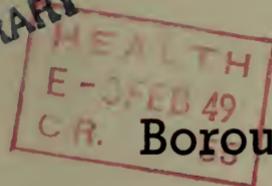


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Borough of Leominster

HEREFORDSHIRE



ANNUAL REPORT

on the

State of the Public Health

For the Year 1947

Staff of the Public Health Department

Medical Officer of Health	...	...	H. F. GREEN, M.A., M.B., D.P.H.
Clerks	...	...	MISS D. M. J. BRAMFITT (resigned on 18th January, 1947)
	...	...	MISS S. DENSHAM (appointed on 17th February, 1947)
Sanitary Inspector	...	...	A. S. SMITH, M.S.I.A., C.R. San. I., Cert. Meat and other Foods, Cert. C.I.S. (Tel.: Leominster 257)

Public Health Office: 4, CHURCH STREET, LEOMINSTER.

Telephone: Leominster 95.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Members of the Leominster Borough Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1947.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the staff and members of the Council for the willing co-operation which has made my period of service so pleasant.

I should also like to draw the attention of the Council to the debt the town owes to your Sanitary Inspector for his unsparing work during my term of office.

As the Council's housing scheme progresses, it is hoped that the pressure of overcrowding will be relieved and it will then be necessary to consider the very bad state of some of the property in the Bridge Street area, property which is old and dilapidated and is so situated that it is liable to serious flooding. Recurring flooding of the Bridge Street, North Road and Mill Street area has not so far been directly responsible for any epidemic; but each successive inundation worsens the conditions under which the inhabitants live, and so is responsible for a great deal of ill health.

H. F. GREEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.—STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in Acres)	8,728
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1947) according to the Rate Books	1,673
Rateable Value	£35,175
Sum represented by a penny rate	£136 10 6

EXTRACT FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR:

LIVE BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	21.2
STILL-BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 Live and Still Births)	7.7
DEATH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	14.8
INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE (per 1,000 Live Births)	54.3
DEATHS FROM Puerperal CAUSES: One death during 1947 was attributable to maternal causes.	

COMPARABLE DATA FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1947:

LIVE BIRTH RATE	20.5
DEATH RATE	12.0
INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE	41.0

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

LABORATORY FACILITIES

Laboratory facilities continued to be available at the County Public Health Laboratory, Hereford, which is under the administration of the Medical Research Council.

CLINICS

There are none provided by the Local Authority.

Under the County Council schemes the following Clinic facilities are available to residents in the district:—

Child Welfare Centre: In the annexe at the Leominster Cottage Hospital, every Friday, 2—4 p.m.

Venereal Diseases: At the County Council Hospital, Hereford, on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Orthopaedic After-Care Clinic: Organised on a voluntary basis and held at the Hospital annexe.

The County schemes also provide for Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, Paediatric, Ear, Nose and Throat, and Eye Clinics. Children are referred to these Clinics as and when required, on the recommendation of the School Medical or Infant Welfare Authority, at the request of the Medical Practitioner.

I am indebted to Mr. A. S. Smith, Sanitary Inspector to the Council, for the following statement (Sections C to E) furnished under Article 27 (Sub-section 18) of the Sanitary Officers (outside London) Regulations.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES AND INSPECTION.

WATER

Chlorination of piped water supplies was continued throughout the year.

PIPED SUPPLIES

1. The water supply of the area and of its several parts has been satisfactory: (a) in quality, (b) in quantity.

2. BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS

Raw Water before treatment — Ten samples taken and nine reported upon as satisfactory.

Water after chlorination — Forty-three samples taken and all reported satisfactory.

3. CHEMICAL EXAMINATIONS

Raw Water before treatment — Three samples taken and reported upon as satisfactory.

Water after chlorination — One sample taken and reported upon as satisfactory.

4. No plumbo-solvent action — hard water.

5. The one sample of raw water reported upon as unsatisfactory unless submitted to some form of purification treatment, was from the end of a temporary pipe line when test pumping in operation.

Action: (a) All water is chlorinated before service to dwelling houses;
(b) Follow up samples taken and all reported upon as satisfactory.

6. Number of dwelling-houses and population supplied from Public Water Mains:—

(a) Direct to houses—1,313 houses. Approximate population 5,000.
(b) By means of standpipes—101 houses. Approximate population 400.

The approximate number of houses relying on well water is 191.

Approximate population 700.

Samples taken and submitted for analysis:—

(a) Piped supplies (house taps, Waterworks well and Midsummer Meadow well)	...	...	...	...	...	57
(b) Wells and springs	...	...	...	...	...	15
(c) Swimming Bath	...	...	...	...	...	4
(d) Rivers and Town Ditch	...	...	...	...	...	5

REMARKS

The following out-parish areas are not provided with piped supplies: Brierley, Broadward and Elms Green, Stagbatch, Hyde Ash, Aulden and Wintercott, Ivington, Newton, Stretford and Hennor, Wharton and Marlbrook. In general the water supplies for houses in out-parish areas are private shallow wells, usually unlined and of a type subject to contamination. Many houses are without sufficient water during dry summers. Piped supplies exist in the Borough proper, and a portion of the out-parish.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

HOUSE DRAINS AND OTHER BUILDINGS

New drains laid (old premises)	...	...	...	...	...	12
Cleansed, trapped or ventilated	...	...	...	...	...	44
Inspection chambers built (old premises)	...	...	...	...	...	9

BOROUGH PROPER

Drainage of old premises is in the main poor, consisting usually of unjointed pipes, devoid of inspection chambers or ventilation shafts.

No Borough sewage works exists and sewage disposal is to an open ditch.

OUT-PARISH

New houses drained to septic tanks. Old houses generally feed to ditches.

CLOSETS

Additional provided (old houses and other buildings)	...	...	...	...	15
Conversions or renewals	...	...	...	...	2

BOROUGH PROPER

Common usage of closets, usually by the occupants of two houses, prevails in many cases. A type of closet existing on a large scale is the long hopper with a wooden surround. As new houses come into being, and areas are cleared, common usages will cease.

OUT-PARISH

Pail and privy closets predominate.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

Flooding of the lower regions of the Borough proper again occurred during the year. Houses in Bridge Street and Mill Street are unfortunately situated.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

Tipping was continued at the public tip with satisfactory results. Collections in the Borough proper take place once or twice weekly according to locality.

In the out-parish there is no public collection, though certain houses in close proximity to the Borough proper have refuse removed by the Council for a yearly charge.

RODENT CONTROL

The sewers received re-treatment at certain manholes. Little evidence of rat infestation was found in the sewers. The Public Abattoir and refuse tip receive periodic treatments.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES

None in the Borough or out-parish.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

Two small factories commenced during the year.

INSPECTIONS UNDER THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	28	9	1	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	36	18	2	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	64	27	3	—

Cases in which defects were found:—

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found					Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector		
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ...	1	1	—	1		—
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	—	—	—	—		—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—		—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—		—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—		—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)						
(a) Insufficient	2	2	—	—		—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—		—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—		—
Other offences against the Act, (not including offences relating to outwork) ...	—	—	—	—		—
TOTAL ...	3	3	—	1		—

TENTS AND CARAVANS

Camping does not exist on a large scale — no sites registered.

BED BUGS

Although many old houses are infested, one case only was reported during the year.

DISINFECTION on account of Infectious disease:

Premises fumigated 5

Mode of disinfection: Formalin lamps and liquid spraying. Small portable sack disinfecter available.

SANITARY INSPECTION

TABLE SHOWING INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT DURING THE
YEAR TOGETHER WITH ACTION TAKEN AND THE RESULTS

INSPECTIONS UNDER		Number	Informal Notices served	Statutory Notices served	Notices complied with
Housing (1936) Act	...	67	—	—	—
Housing (Public Health Acts)	...	323	176	8	167
Factories	...	21	3	—	3
Cowsheds and Dairies	...	91	2	—	2
Milk Samples	...	82	3	—	3
Bakehouses	...	6	—	—	—
Food premises and Kitchens	...	55	3	—	3
Abattoir	...	936	—	—	—
Drains (Smoke, Colour and Water tests)	...	10	—	—	—
Water Samples	...	81	—	—	—
Infectious diseases	...	13	—	—	—
Rodent Control	...	13	—	—	—
Ice Cream Premises	...	22	2	—	—
Ice Cream Samples	...	23	4	—	4
Miscellaneous Visits	...	41	—	—	—
Schools—School Camps	...	4	—	—	—
Tents and Caravans	...	4	3	—	3
Hopyards	...	4	4	—	4
TOTALS	...	1,796	200	8	189
Defects remedied	...	...	...	...	185
Dustbins renewed	...	...	...	...	72

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

Against an application list of over 550 families for Council houses, only twelve families have been re-housed during the year in new Council houses. However, the actual number of Council houses in course of erection during the year was as follows:—

48 Permanent brick houses

16 Airey prefabricated houses

As stated in last year's report approximately one half of the privately owned houses in the Borough are only fit for demolition and replacement, yet the position will continue for many years until a sufficient number of new houses have been erected to ease the position. Furthermore the serious shortage of houses must unfortunately prolong the life of the condemned houses to permit a small elasticity of movement to families who have no homes (in lodgings), and earnestly plead for a shelter, however unfit, in preference to lodgings.

During the year approximately 200 houses in Bridge Street, Mill Street and North Road area were seriously flooded. In this low lying area, apart from liability to flooding, are situate a large proportion of century-plus awful slums of the Borough. Charitable relief and help in this and previous years of flooding have been appreciable and very highly commendable, but measures of charity only provide a temporary relief and do not cure the damp unhealthy conditions. In my opinion, the one and only remedy is demolition of all unhealthy dwellings on low-lying sites, cessation of use of low-lying sites for housing purposes, and the re-housing of families on well elevated and desirable lands.

The present position is approximately as follows:—

CATEGORIES

Number of houses	1	2	3	4	5	Total
...	792	207	96	9	501	1,605

Category 1 — Satisfactory.

.. 2 — Minor defects.

.. 3 — Requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement.

.. 4 — Appropriate for reconditioning under Housing (Rural Workers) Acts.

.. 5 — Requiring demolition and replacement.

Void houses demolished during the year	2
--	-----	-----	-----	---

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:

1. (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health and Housing Acts	...	...	...	243
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	390
2. Number of dwelling houses found not to be, in all respects, reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	42

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY NOTICES DURING THE YEAR:

Proceedings under the Public Health Act:—

1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	10
2. Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after the service of formal notices	...	...	...	8
(a) By owners	...	...	...	8
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	Nil

VAN DWELLINGS — Nil.

HOUSES BUILT AND OCCUPIED DURING THE YEAR:

1. By Local Authority	...	...	...	...	12
2. Privately	...	...	...	...	8

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

1. MILK SUPPLY

Routine inspections of farms and dairies.

(a) Examination for bacterial content — Samples sent to County Laboratory.

(b) Examination for Tubercl Bacilli — None by Local Authority.

Licences suspended (Graded Milks) by County Council 3

Licences restored (Graded Milks) by County Council 2

2. FOOD PREMISES

Routine inspections from time to time. General standard of cleanliness is good.

3. ICE CREAM

The following tables show the number of samples of Ice Cream taken, analyses and grades.

Methylene Blue Test.		Number of Samples	Provisional Grades	Number of Samples
Not decolourised in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours	...	12	1	13
Decolourised immediately	...	1		
" in $\frac{1}{2}$ hour	...	1	2	4
" in 1 hour	...	1		
" in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours	...	1	3	5
" in $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours	...	2		
" in 3 hours	...	2	4	1
" in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours	...	1		
" in 4 hours	...	1		
" in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours	...	1		
Total Samples taken	...	23	Total Samples taken	23

NOTE: In cases where samples fell within Grades 3 and 4, the vendors were communicated with. Improved plant and equipment is to be installed in two premises.

4. MEAT

MEAT INSPECTION (PUBLIC ABATTOIR)

Centralised slaughtering under the Ministry of Food scheme of control is in operation. Areas served are Leominster Borough, Leominster and Wigmore Rural District, Kington Urban and Rural Districts and Weobley Rural District. Inspection is carried out by your Sanitary Inspector, who is a qualified Meat Inspector. This responsibility entails for him additional evening and week-end work.

The undernoted were slaughtered and inspected during the year:

Beasts	Pigs	Sheep	Calves	Total
1,164	85	5,718	351	7,318

Diseased Meat discovered and dealt with:—

ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS

	Beasts	Pigs	Sheep	Calves
Whole carcases condemned	27	4	51	7
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	608	10	1421	9
Percentage of number affected with diseases other than Tuberculosis	54.6%	16.5%	25.7%	4.5%

TUBERCULOSIS ONLY

	Beasts	Pigs	Sheep	Calves
Whose carcases condemned	19	1	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	21	—	—	—
Percentage of number affected with Tuberculosis	3.5%	1.2%	—	—
Weight of diseased meat discovered and dealt with	30,870lbs.	748lbs.	5,765lbs.	644lbs.
Total	—	—	38,027 lbs.	

The percentage figures show the proportion of food animals found diseased.

METHOD OF INSPECTION

In accordance with Ministry of Health Memorandum 62 (Foods), with certain relaxations.

The Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, are well observed by all meat traders. No Meat Marketing scheme under Part III of the Regulations is in operation. Byelaws are in force respecting slaughter-houses.

5. OTHER FOODS

The undernoted foods were surrendered during the year:—

50 tins Fruit; 48 tins Vegetables; 65 tins Fish; 7 stone Fish; 121 packets Dates; 1 tin Fish Paste; 19 jars Pickled Foods; 29 6lb. tins Corned Beef; 10 12oz. tins Corned Beef; 2 tins Bacon; 27lbs. Bacon (Ham); 1 tin (5lbs.) Cheese; 2 tins Soup; 2 tins Sausages; 12lbs. Sausages; 179 tins Milk; 64 tins Fish Cakes; 2 jars and 8 tins Jam/Syrup; 6lbs. Flour; 63lbs. Biscuits; 482lbs. Imported Beef; 99 5oz. packets Dried Egg; 67lbs. Sugar (salvaged); 21 tins Meat; 1 tin Macaroni; 97 4oz. packets Tea (salvaged).

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The occurrence of cases of measles throughout the summer months of 1947 suggested that a fairly severe epidemic would occur during the winter. Our fears were unfortunately fulfilled.

The four cases of Scarlet Fever were sporadic cases, three were isolated at home; the fourth had to be removed to Hospital on account of the overcrowded conditions of the home.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES, ACCORDING TO AGE

DISEASE	AGE OF PATIENT													TOTAL	
	0—1	1—2	2—3	3—4	4—5	5—6	6—7	7—10	10—15	15—20	20—30	30—40	Over 40	Unknown	
Measles	—	2	1	4	7	5	6	2	7	—	1	1	—	3	39
Whooping Cough	4	4	4	2	4	3	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	4
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	2
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	3

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The state of immunisation of the child population of the district at the end of 1947 is indicated in the table below:

Number	Under 5 years of age		Between 5 and 15 years of age		Total under 15
	Number	Percentage of group	Number	Percentage of group	
179	33.8%		448	52.0%	627

The figures showing the percentage of children immunised against diphtheria are still influenced somewhat by the large movements of population that took place at the end of the war.

The number of children now under the age of five years, who have at any time been immunised, has risen from 144 to 179. Further improvement is hoped for this coming year as the facilities now available are more comprehensive by the introduction of private doctors to the scheme.

“ LOCAL ” CHILDREN, aged 0—4 years.

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	
Number immunised during the year	...	82	8	66	78	41	31	41	50	53
Number immunised at any time	...	82	69	119	164	155	156	145	144	179

“ Immunised ” indicates only those children who have completed a full course of injections.

As from the 5th July, 1948, all immunisation becomes the responsibility of the Herefordshire County Council. The County Medical Officer will in future report annually on the state of immunisation of children.

TUBERCULOSIS

At the end of 1947, the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of 23 males and 12 females, who normally reside within the Borough.

During the year, six new cases were notified, four on account of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and two because of the presence of the disease in parts of the body other than the lungs.

During the same period, five deaths of persons suffering from Tuberculosis occurred, one person recovered from the disease, and three left the district.

CASES ON THE TUBERCULOSIS REGISTER

Year	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Total
1939	6	6	12
1940	9	9	18
1941	11	13	24
1942	13	14	27
1943	14	14	28
1944	20	16	36
1945	20	16	36
1946	21	17	38
1947	19	16	35

CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages)

Disease	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis	5	—	5
Influenza	1	—	1
Cancer (all forms)	4	6	10
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	3	13	16
Diseases of the Heart and Arteries	8	20	28
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	2	3	5
Diseases of the Digestive system	1	1	2
Appendicitis	1	—	1
Nephritis	2	1	3
Maternal Causes	—	1	1
Premature Birth	1	2	3
Congenital Conditions (at birth)	2	1	3
Suicide	—	1	1
Violence	1	1	2
All other causes	4	5	9